

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:22 p.m. at the Windsor Hotel Toya Resort and Spa. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda of Japan.

Remarks on Intelligence Reform Legislation

July 9, 2008

Today the United States Congress passed a vital piece of legislation that will make it easier for this administration and future administrations to protect the American people. This vital intelligence bill will allow our national security professionals to quickly and effectively monitor the plans of terrorists outside the United States, while respecting the liberties of the American people.

This legislation is critical to America's safety; it is long overdue. Months ago, my administration set out key criteria that this intelligence legislation would have to have before I would sign it into law. The Attorney General and Director of National Intelligence report that the bill Congress passed today meets these criteria, and therefore, I will soon sign the bill into law.

This bill will help our intelligence professionals learn who the terrorists are talking to, what they're saying, and what they're planning. It will ensure that those companies whose assistance is necessary to protect the country will, themselves, be protected from lawsuits for past or future cooperation with the Government. It will uphold our most solemn obligation as officials of the Federal Government to protect the American people.

I want to thank the members of my administration who worked hard to get this legislation passed. I thank the Democratic and Republican leadership in the Congress for their efforts, particularly House Majority Leader Hoyer, House Republican Whip Blunt, Senators Bond and Rockefeller, Congressmen Hoekstra, Reyes, and Smith.

This legislation shows that even in an election year, we can come together and get important pieces of legislation passed.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:01 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Attorney General Michael B.

Mukasey. Due to the 13-hour time difference, these remarks were made after those to the White House press pool in Toyako, Japan.

Remarks on Signing the FISA Amendments Act of 2008

July 10, 2008

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thank you. Welcome to the Rose Garden. Today I'm pleased to sign landmark legislation that is vital to the security of our people. The bill will allow our intelligence professionals to quickly and effectively monitor the communications of terrorists abroad, while respecting the liberties of Americans here at home. The bill I sign today will help us meet our most solemn responsibility: to stop new attacks and to protect our people.

Members of my administration have made a vigorous case for this important law. I want to thank them, and I also want to thank the Members of the House and the Senate who've worked incredibly hard to get this legislation done. Mr. Vice President, welcome.

Respect the Members of the Senate and the House who've joined us—Senate Republican Whip Jon Kyl; John Boehner, House Republican leader; Roy Blunt, House Republican whip. I do want to pay special tribute to Congressman Steny Hoyer, House majority leader, for his hard work on this bill. I thank so very much Senator Jay Rockefeller, chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, and Senator Kit Bond, vice chairman, for joining us. I appreciate the hard work of Congressman Silvestre Reyes, chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and Congressman Pete Hoekstra, ranking member. I also welcome Congressman Lamar Smith, ranking member of the House Judiciary. I thank all the other Members of the House and Senate who've joined us; appreciate your very good work.

I welcome Attorney General Michael Mukasey, as well as Admiral Mike McConnell, Director of National Intelligence. Appreciate other members of the administration who have joined us. I want to thank the congressional staff who are here and all the supporters of this piece of legislation.